

CLAIMS

1. Method of discovery, by a device connectable to a communication network, of the other devices connected to this network, characterized in that
5 it comprises the following steps :

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- connection of the device to the said network ;
- despatching of an announcement message containing autodescription information describing the device destined for all the other devices connected to this network ;
- despatching of an autodescription information request message to all the other devices connected to this network ;
- reception of a response message from each of the other devices of the network containing the autodescription information of this other device.

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2. Method according to Claim 1 where the request message and the announcement message are merged.

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3. Method according to one of Claims 1 or 2 where the autodescription information describing a device contains the address on the network of the device.

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4. Method according to one of Claims 1 to 3 where the autodescription information describing a device contains a unique global identifier, different from the address, identifying the device on the network.

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5. Method according to one of Claims 1 to 4 where the autodescription information describing a device contains the characteristics of a software module making it possible to control this device.

6. Method according to one of Claims 1 to 5 where the announcement message is despatched by broadcasting over the network.
 7. Method according to one of Claims 1 to 5 where the announcement message is despatched by multicasting on a predefined multicasting address to which the other devices must have subscribed.
 8. Device connectable to a network characterized in that it possesses means for despatching an announcement message, containing autodescription information describing it, to all the other devices in the network, means for despatching a message for requesting autodescription information to all the other devices in the network and means for receiving the response messages containing information describing each of the other devices of the network.
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9. Device according to Claim 8, where the autodescription information describing a device contains the address on the network of the device.
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10. Device according to one of Claims 8 to 9 which comprises means making it possible to generate a unique global identifier, different from the address of the device, on the network.
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11. Device according to one of Claims 8 to 10 where the autodescription information describing a device contains the characteristics of a software module making it possible to control this device.
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12. Device according to one of Claims 8 to 11, which comprises means for despatching the announcement message by broadcasting over the network.
 13. Device according to one of Claims 8 to 11 which comprises means for despatching the announcement message by multicasting on a

predefined multicasting address to which the other devices must have subscribed.